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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001253

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DEPT FOR EUR A/S FRIED AND EUR/SNEC MANN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/10/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [SY](#) [IS](#) [KWBG](#) [AR](#) [AJ](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR A/S FRIED'S MARCH 16-17 VISIT TO ANKARA

REF: ANKARA 1250

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

11. (C) We look forward to your visit to Ankara, which is very timely in view of events in the Caucasus. The Turkish government has heard conflicting accounts of the Rambouillet talks, is disappointed at the apparent lack of progress, and is anxious to hear your and Steve Mann's views on the way forward. Turkey has recently presented some ideas to Armenia to try to break the logjam in bilateral relations (reftel). At the working level, the GOT has made it clear that substantial progress towards a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for Turkey to consider opening its border with Armenia, insisting that progress must also be made on bilateral issues (genocide and border recognition). FM Gul and possibly PM Erdogan display more flexibility. Your interlocutors will also be interested in U.S. thinking on Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Other topics of note are discussed below.

12. (C) Syria and Iran. FM Gul has reportedly given Bashar Assad tough messages about the need for Syria to cooperate with UNIIIC, prevent foreign fighters from entering Iraq, and cease its support to Palestinian rejectionists. The GOT has given Iran a strong message on the need to cooperate with the IAEA and restore international trust. It has also reportedly given Tehran clear messages on its involvement in Iraq and attitude toward the Middle East peace process. Ankara did not, however, take a very tough public line on Ahmedi-nejad's anti-Israel rhetoric.

13. (C) Hamas. The GOT's reception of a Hamas delegation on February 16 was awkward and amateurish. Turkish officials assured us they impressed on Hamas the need to fulfill Quartet conditions, but Turkish public statements during the visit were less than forceful. Ankara subsequently reached out to Israel. MFA U/S Tuygan will visit Israel soon and FM Livni has reportedly accepted an invitation to visit Turkey later this spring.

14. (C) Iraq. The GOT has been helpful in reaching out to disaffected Sunnis and encouraging them to participate in the political process. Turkey seeks to re-open its consulate in Mosul and appreciates Mission Iraq and CENTCOM's recent help. GOT Iraq Coordinator Celikkol visited Baghdad February 23-25 and met with a wide array of Iraqi political figures there. PM Jafari visited Ankara immediately afterward and had useful discussions on economic cooperation, including the possibility of opening additional border crossings. The GOT remains opposed to settling Kirkuk's status through a referendum, arguing for a consensus solution instead. Ankara looks forward to Makhmour's closure and the results of our dialogue with the Europeans on PKK activities there, but it always wants more action on the PKK than we can deliver.

15. (C) Turkish officials have made clear they have accepted Muqtada al-Sadr's request to visit Ankara. The date and level at which he would be received have not been decided. We have expressed our strong misgivings about such a visit at multiple levels of the government and have urged the GOT, if it meets with Sadr, to do so at the lowest possible level while delivering the unambiguous message that Sadr cannot promote violence and participate in Iraqi politics at the same time.

16. (C) Guatemala/Venezuela UNSC Candidacies. FM Gul told Ambassador privately that Turkey will not support Venezuela's bid. Turkish officials have told us that they are seeking reciprocal support from Guatemala on Turkey's candidacy for the 2009-2010 WE and Others UNSC seat. Although we're likely to end up at the right place on this issue, the Turks should hear from you on the importance Washington attaches to this.

17. (C) Cyprus. Turkey appreciates our support for FM Gul's Cyprus proposals in January. It is awaiting the start of UN-sponsored inter-communal technical talks -- as long as they remain technical and do not touch on broader settlement equities. Turkey should do everything it can to make sure that Talat and his representatives are authorized to conclude agreements with their Greek Cypriot counterparts during the talks and are not seen as puppets constrained by Turkish demands. Your interlocutors will greatly appreciate hearing that the U.S. does not view the upcoming technical talks as a substitute for an Annan Plan-based overall settlement.

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WILSON